Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1 and 7 through 11 to read, as follows.

1. **(Currently Amended)** A sheet processing apparatus comprising:

a positioning unit arranged to position each of sequentially conveyed sheets at a predetermined position, wherein said positioning unit positions a sheet at a predetermined punching position in a direction substantially orthogonal to a conveying direction of the sheet, by grasping ~~both end portions of~~ the sheet in a lateral direction;

an accommodating unit disposed at a portion upstream of said positioning unit and arranged to accommodate a sheet to be conveyed to said positioning unit; ~~sheet processing apparatus;~~

a punching unit arranged to perform punching one-by-one for a sheet positioned by said positioning unit;

a discharge unit arranged to discharge a sheet punched by said punching unit; and

a controlling unit arranged to make said positioning unit operate to position one-by-one the sheet prior to a punching operation by said punching unit and to make said accommodating unit accommodate subsequently conveyed sheets during the positioning operation or the punching operation.

2. **(Canceled)**

3. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprises a stopper arranged to position the sheet at a predetermined punching position in the conveying direction of the sheet by contacting a leading edge of the conveyed sheet.

4. **(Original)** An apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein said stopper is disposed at a portion downstream from said punching unit in a conveying path.

5. **(Original)** An apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein said stopper comprises a contact member disposed so as to be movable between a contact position for performing the contact operation by contacting the leading edge of the conveyed sheet and a retracting position where conveyance of the sheet is not hindered.

6. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said positioning unit comprises a pair of grasping planes disposed substantially parallel to the conveying direction of the sheet, and wherein at least one of said grasping planes is movable in a direction substantially orthogonal to the conveying direction.

7. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein said punching unit punches at least two arranged holes in the sheet, and wherein, after performing a positioning operation according to one of positioning by grasping ~~the both end portions of~~ the sheet in the lateral direction and positioning by said stopper, said positioning unit performs a positioning operation according to the other positioning, based

on a relationship between the conveying direction of the sheet and a direction of arrangement of the holes.

8. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus according to 7, wherein said positioning unit performs the positioning operation by grasping ~~the both end portions of~~ the sheet in the lateral direction before the positioning operation by the stopper, when the conveying direction of the sheet is substantially orthogonal to the direction of arrangement of the holes.

9. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein said positioning unit performs the positioning operation by the stopper before the positioning operation by grasping ~~the both end portions of~~ the sheet in the lateral direction, when the conveying direction of the sheet is substantially parallel to the direction of arrangement of the holes.

10. **(Currently Amended)** An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming unit arranged to form an image on a sheet;

a positioning unit arranged to position each of sequentially conveyed sheets on which images have been formed by said image forming unit, at a predetermined position, wherein said positioning unit positions a sheet at a predetermined punching position in a direction substantially orthogonal to a conveying direction of the sheet, by grasping ~~both end portions of~~ the sheet in a lateral direction;

an accommodating unit disposed at a portion upstream of said positioning unit and arranged to accommodate a sheet conveyed from said image forming unit and to be conveyed to said positioning unit;

a punching unit arranged to perform punching one-by-one for a sheet positioned by said positioning unit;

a discharge unit arranged to discharge a sheet punched by said punching unit; and

a controlling unit arranged to make said positioning unit operate to position one-by-one the sheet prior to a punching operation by said punching unit and to make said accommodating unit accommodate subsequently conveyed sheets during the positioning operation and/or the punching operation.

11. **(Currently Amended)** A method for controlling a sheet processing apparatus said sheet processing apparatus including:

a positioning unit arranged to position each of sequentially conveyed sheets at a predetermined position, wherein said positioning unit positions a sheet at a predetermined punching position in a direction substantially orthogonal to a conveying direction of the sheet, by grasping ~~both end portions of~~ the sheet in a lateral direction;

an accommodating unit disposed at a portion upstream of said positioning unit and arranged to accommodate the sheet to be conveyed to said positioning unit; ~~sheet processing apparatus;~~

a punching unit arranged to perform punching one-by-one for a sheet positioned by said positioning unit; and

a discharge unit arranged to discharge a sheet punched by said punching unit, said method for controlling the sheet processing apparatus comprising:

a first controlling step of making said positioning unit operate to position one-by-one the sheet prior to a punching operation by said punching unit; and

a second controlling step of making said accommodating unit accommodate subsequently conveyed sheets during the positioning operation or the punching operation.

12. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said accommodating unit is able to accommodate a plurality of sheets.

13. **(Previously Presented)** An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said accommodating unit shifts the position to accommodate the sheets depending on the size of conveyed sheets.